

ROAD TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS IN QUEENSLAND.Three Months Ended 31st December, 1956.

Note: Throughout this bulletin, a large number of minor accidents reported to the Police, but not involving death or personal injury and doing vehicle damage worth less than £10, have been omitted.

Road traffic accidents in Queensland during the three months ended 31st December, 1956, reached record heights when 7,492 accidents were reported. This figure is 699 above the number reported during the September quarter, 1956, and is 608 greater than the previous record of 6,884 reported during the December quarter, 1955. Non-fatal injuries showed the same trend, reaching a record 2,616 during the quarter, an increase of 292 over the previous quarter, and 101 greater than the record attained in the previous December quarter. Despite these high figures for accidents and non-fatal injuries, the number of deaths during the quarter was average for a December quarter, (81), and was 12 fewer than the record 93 reported in the September quarter, 1956.

Of the 81 persons who suffered fatal injuries on the roads, 29 were passengers, 23 pedestrians, 14 motor vehicle drivers, 13 motor cyclists, and 2 pedal cyclists. Compared with the previous December quarter, the number of deaths increased by 10, the major increases being in passengers where there were 9 more deaths, pedestrians 3 more, and pedal cyclists 1 more. With motor cyclist deaths remaining unchanged, the only decrease evident was among motor drivers where the death toll fell from 17 to 14.

The record 2,616 cases of non-fatal injury during the quarter were 101 greater than the previously highest total of 2,515 recorded during the December quarter, 1955. Whilst cases of injury among motor cyclists (461) and pedestrians (272) decreased by 16 and 21 respectively from the numbers recorded during the December quarter, 1955, significant increases appeared for all other types of road users. Cases of injury among passengers rose by 53 to a record 926; motor driver injuries rose by 67 to a record 656; and numbers of pedal cyclists injured rose by 18 to a record of 301.

During the quarter, 68 per cent. of the road users under 5 years of age who became road casualties were passengers in vehicles, and the remaining 32 per cent. were pedestrians. For 5 and 6 year old children, 48 per cent. of the casualties were passengers, 46 per cent. were pedestrians, while the remaining 6 per cent. were pedal cyclists. Among vehicle drivers, certain age groups predominated for each class of vehicle. The 21-29 age group provided the highest number of casualties of any age grouping of motor drivers, being 30 per cent. of total motor driver casualties. Among motor cyclists, however, 46 per cent. of the casualties came from the 17-20 age group, and, of all pedal cycle casualties, 54 per cent. were aged between 7 and 16 years. Of pedestrian casualties, 23 per cent. were aged 60 years and over, and 20 per cent. came from the 7-16 age group.

Drivers of motor vehicles were held responsible for 4,657 (62 per cent.) of all accidents, accounting for 33 (41 per cent.) of the deaths and 1,170 (45 per cent.) of the cases of non-fatal injury. "Excessive speed" was the most serious fault of drivers, accounting for 10 deaths and 237 cases of injury from 354 accidents. "Inattentive driving" was primarily responsible for the greatest number of accidents (1,178) and resulted in 6 deaths and 236 cases of injury. Five deaths and 54 cases of injury resulted from 109 accidents in which the driver fell asleep or was overcome by drowsiness, and 4 deaths and 182 cases of injury were the outcome of 468 accidents where the driver failed to give the right of way at an intersection. "Intoxicated" drivers were the cause of 3 deaths and 51 cases of injury from 116 accidents, and "failure to make a right hand turn without due care" was responsible for 2 deaths and 32 cases of injury from 153 accidents.

Motor cyclists were held responsible for 403 (5 per cent.) of all accidents which resulted in 10 (12 per cent.) of the deaths and 311 (12 per cent.) of the injuries. Their most serious fault was "excessive speed" which caused 4 deaths and 57 cases of injury in 71 accidents, and "not keeping to the left" which resulted in 11 accidents in which 2 people died, and 10 were injured. "Inattentive riding" was again responsible for most accidents, causing 111 in which 1 person died and injuries totalled 87.

Pedestrians were at fault in 247 accidents (3 per cent.) which resulted in 20 (25 per cent.) of the deaths and 240 (9 per cent.) of the injuries.

Among causes not directly due to actions of road users, "road or weather conditions" were held to be the main factor in 662 (9 per cent.), and "vehicle defects" responsible in 512 (7 per cent.) accidents. The former resulted in 6 deaths and 246 injuries, the latter 8 deaths and 230 cases of injury.

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Table 1 - Summary of Road Traffic Accidents in Queensland, 1952 to 1956.

| Year. | Three Months Ended - | | | | Twelve Months Ended December. | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------|------------|-----------|----------------------------------|--------|
| | March. | June. | September. | December. | | |
| Number of Accidents Reported. | | | | | | |
| 1952 | .. | 2,980 | 3,556 | 3,465 | 3,740 | 13,741 |
| 1953 | .. | 3,628 | 4,083 | 4,070 | 4,452 | 16,233 |
| 1954 | .. | 4,393 | 4,960 | 4,937 | 5,456 | 19,746 |
| 1955 | .. | 5,128 | 5,917 | 6,410 | 6,884 | 24,339 |
| 1956 | .. | 6,104 | 6,159 | 6,793 | 7,492 | 26,548 |
| Persons Killed. | | | | | | |
| 1952 | .. | 48 | 61 | 89 | 86 | 284 |
| 1953 | .. | 56 | 70 | 75 | 75 | 276 |
| 1954 | .. | 58 | 70 | 56 | 89 | 273 |
| 1955 | .. | 65 | 63 | 78 | 71 | 277 |
| 1956 | .. | 71 | 78 | 93 | 81 | 323 |
| Persons Injured. | | | | | | |
| 1952 | .. | 1,558 | 1,785 | 1,780 | 1,862 | 6,985 |
| 1953 | .. | 1,612 | 1,898 | 1,904 | 2,154 | 7,568 |
| 1954 | .. | 1,834 | 2,041 | 2,001 | 2,271 | 8,147 |
| 1955 | .. | 2,040 | 2,109 | 2,217 | 2,515 | 8,881 |
| 1956 | .. | 2,236 | 2,202 | 2,324 | 2,616 | 9,378 |

Table 2 - Types of Road Users Killed or Injured in Queensland.

| Period. | Motor Drivers. | Motor Cyclists. | Pedal Cyclists. | Passengers. ^a | Pedestrians. | Total. |
|------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------|
| Persons Killed. | | | | | | |
| <u>Year Ended 31st Dec.-</u> | | | | | | |
| 1952 | 58 | 49 | 19 | 93 | 65 | 284 |
| 1953 | 45 | 60 | 16 | 91 | 64 | 276 |
| 1954 | 46 | 60 | 18 | 85 | 64 | 273 |
| 1955 | 55 | 52 | 17 | 77 | 76 | 277 |
| 1956 | 68 | 43 | 15 | 108 | 89 | 323 |
| <u>Quarter Ended -</u> | | | | | | |
| December, 1955 .. | 17 | 13 | 1 | 20 | 20 | 71 |
| March, 1956 .. | 11 | 11 | 3 | 27 | 19 | 71 |
| June, 1956 .. | 21 | 9 | 5 | 22 | 21 | 78 |
| September, 1956 .. | 22 | 10 | 5 | 30 | 26 | 93 |
| December, 1956 .. | 14 | 13 | 2 | 29 | 23 | 81 |
| Persons Injured. | | | | | | |
| <u>Year Ended 31st Dec.-</u> | | | | | | |
| 1952 | 1,177 | 1,537 | 889 | 2,430 | 952 | 6,985 |
| 1953 | 1,343 | 1,715 | 944 | 2,521 | 1,045 | 7,568 |
| 1954 | 1,556 | 1,570 | 1,021 | 2,928 | 1,072 | 8,147 |
| 1955 | 1,897 | 1,617 | 1,082 | 3,095 | 1,190 | 8,881 |
| 1956 | 2,192 | 1,501 | 1,157 | 3,342 | 1,186 | 9,378 |
| <u>Quarter Ended -</u> | | | | | | |
| December, 1955 .. | 589 | 477 | 283 | 873 | 293 | 2,515 |
| March, 1956 .. | 484 | 332 | 282 | 850 | 288 | 2,236 |
| June, 1956 .. | 502 | 331 | 283 | 741 | 345 | 2,202 |
| September, 1956 .. | 550 | 377 | 291 | 825 | 281 | 2,324 |
| December, 1956 .. | 656 | 461 | 301 | 926 | 272 | 2,616 |

^a Including tram drivers, riders of animals, drivers of animal-drawn vehicles, &c.

Table 3 - Ages of Persons Killed or Injured in Road Traffic Accidents,
Three Months Ended 31st December, 1956.

| Category. | Killed or Injured. | Under 5 | 5-6. | 7-16. | 17-20. | 21-29. | 30-39. | 40-49. | 50-59. | 60 and Over. | Not Stated. | Total. |
|----------------|--------------------------|------------|------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----------------|----------------|--------|
| Motor Drivers | Killed | - | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | - | 14 |
| | Injured | - | - | 2 | 87 | 201 | 150 | 99 | 66 | 49 | 2 | 656 |
| Motor Cyclists | Killed | - | - | - | 5 | 6 | 2 | - | - | - | - | 13 |
| | Injured | - | - | 6 | 211 | 146 | 49 | 28 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 461 |
| Pedal Cyclists | Killed | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | 2 |
| | Injured | - | 3 | 162 | 29 | 28 | 23 | 18 | 12 | 24 | 2 | 301 |
| Passengers | Killed | 2 | - | 4 | 4 | 5 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 4 | - | 28 |
| | Injured | 53 | 22 | 143 | 188 | 161 | 129 | 96 | 57 | 54 | 12 | 915 |
| Pedestrians | Killed | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | 3 | 12 | - | 23 |
| | Injured | 24 | 20 | 57 | 12 | 9 | 31 | 22 | 32 | 53 | 12 | 272 |
| Others | Killed | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | 1 |
| | Injured | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | 4 | - | 2 | 3 | - | 11 |
| Total | Killed | 4 | 1 | 7 | 11 | 14 | 12 | 6 | 7 | 19 | - | 81 |
| | Injured | 77 | 45 | 371 | 528 | 545 | 386 | 263 | 178 | 187 | 36 | 2,616 |

Table 4 - Causes of Road Traffic Accidents in Queensland,
Three Months Ended 31st December, 1956.

| Cause. | Accidents Reported. | Persons Killed. | Persons Injured. | Proportion of Total Accidents Reported. |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| | No. | No. | No. | Per Cent. |
| Faults of Drivers of Motor Vehicles (other than Cycles) | 4,657 | 33 | 1,170 | 62.2 |
| (Excessive speed) | (354) | (10) | (237) | |
| (Inattentive driving) | (1,178) | (6) | (236) | |
| (Driver asleep or drowsy) | (109) | (5) | (54) | |
| (Not giving right of way to other vehicle at intersection) | (468) | (4) | (182) | |
| (Intoxicated) | (116) | (3) | (51) | |
| (Failing to make right hand turn at intersection with due care) | (153) | (2) | (32) | |
| (All other faults) | (2,279) | (3) | (378) | |
| Faults of Riders of Motor Cycles | 403 | 10 | 311 | 5.4 |
| (Excessive speed) | (71) | (4) | (57) | |
| (Not keeping to the left) | (11) | (2) | (10) | |
| (Inattentive riding) | (111) | (1) | (87) | |
| (All other faults) | (210) | (3) | (157) | |
| Faults of Pedal Cyclists | 183 | 1 | 187 | 2.4 |
| Faults of Drivers of Animal-drawn Vehicles and Riders of Animals | 3 | - | 3 | - |
| Faults of Pedestrians | 247 | 20 | 240 | 3.3 |
| Faults of Passengers | 63 | 1 | 58 | 0.8 |
| Motor Vehicle Defects | 471 | 8 | 188 | 6.3 |
| Motor Cycle Defects | 24 | - | 26 | 0.3 |
| Pedal Cycle Defects | 17 | - | 16 | 0.2 |
| Animal-drawn Vehicle Defects | - | - | - | - |
| Caused by Animals | 270 | 1 | 44 | 3.6 |
| Caused by Road Conditions | 537 | 6 | 213 | 7.2 |
| Caused by Weather | 125 | - | 33 | 1.7 |
| Caused by Parties Not Involved in Accident | 458 | 1 | 118 | 6.1 |
| Trams Responsible | 34 | - | 9 | 0.5 |
| Other Causes | - | - | - | - |
| Total | 7,492 | 81 | 2,616 | 100.0 |